

ER 5-3756/A

April 30, 1954

Mr. W. F. Bockwalter, Chief Clerk
Committee on Rules and Administration
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bockwalter:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 26 March 1954 requesting our comments on S. Con. Res. 69: To Establish a Joint Committee on Central Intelligence.

Since its creation, the Central Intelligence Agency has reported to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House as the functions of CIA relate to the common defense generally. The National Security Act of 1947, which established the Agency, came before the Armed Services Committees and all of our subsequent legislation has been handled by these Committees. We have, therefore, felt responsive to them on all matters, other than appropriations.

The proposed Joint Committee on Central Intelligence has been likened to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. In this connection it should be noted that the Central Intelligence Agency does not have the same legislative problems as the Atomic Energy Commission. While CIA has averaged less than one law a year, there were more than 20 bills on atomic energy introduced into the 82nd Congress, and, up to the present time, some 15 in the 83rd Congress. The atomic energy bills before the Joint Committee have covered such subjects as construction, housing facilities at Oak Ridge, self-government at Hanford, and development of atomic energy. On the other hand, the work of intelligence is almost exclusively outside the United States and does not require complicated or extensive legislation.

Furthermore, the atomic energy program has been assigned to a single agency responsible for all aspects of the program and the jurisdiction of its Joint Committee can, therefore, be defined with precision. The intelligence program, however, has been properly established with specific intelligence functions in a number of departments and agencies. The Congress has made me responsible to the National Security Council for the coordination of all such intelligence activities, but the intelligence services of the departments and agencies concerned come within the purview of the appropriate committees of the Congress on substantive matters. The establishment of a Joint Committee on Intelligence would raise a question of jurisdiction between such committees responsible for the intelligence components of other departments and agencies and that of the Joint Committee.

Consideration should also be given to the question of where detailed supervision of intelligence activities should reside in the Federal Government. While it is true that there was no precedent in United States history for a Federal agency dealing exclusively with intelligence prior to the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, it is generally accepted that such an organization, as a whole, is clearly an arm of the Executive and, in part, is related to those responsibilities which constitutionally are in the exclusive jurisdiction of the Executive. In consequence it is also generally accepted that special supervision and review of its activities should be conducted by the President through the National Security Council as is now provided for by law.

In addition to the relationships stated above with the Armed Services Committees, the Central Intelligence Agency has been responsible on financial matters to the Appropriations Committees. The House Committee has, on an annual basis, examined in detail the activities and organization of this Agency. Of course the Appropriations Committees also examine the work of the intelligence components of other departments, particularly those of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

In considering any proposal such as S. Con. Res. 69, due emphasis must be given to security factors. To obtain the cooperation of all those individuals and organizations whose assistance is essential to the proper performance of our duties, we must be in a position to assure them that the confidence inherent in their relationship with us is protected by every precaution and is known to the absolute minimum of those responsible persons who must have knowledge thereof. In addition, persons informed on U. S. intelligence activities are potential targets of hostile operations. Consequently, the security conditions under which any Joint Committee must necessarily operate cannot be overstressed.

Please call on me if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

SDRB

Allen W. Dulles
Director

O/IG/LBK:rm 22 April 54
Rewritten: OGC:LRH:jeb 28 Apr 54
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